

You are searching for information on Henry Hamilton Wood who you believe may have been born in Co Tyrone. He was born about 1847 and he married Isabella Monteith. You have carried out some initial research online and found information in the 1901 and 1911 census as well as references to births, deaths and marriages on the familysearch website. Your objective is to find more information on Henry Hamilton Wood and his family and to go back a further generation.

From your recent consultation with our Research Officer and the work you have already undertaken you will appreciate that searching for Ulster ancestors is not without its difficulties. Civil registration of all births, deaths and marriages did not commence in Ireland until 1864. Non-Catholic marriages are registered from 1 April 1845. Before these dates one is largely dependent on local parish registers for information relating to family history. However, the survival of church records can vary greatly from parish to parish. There are no complete census records for Ireland prior to 1901. Earlier census records were almost completely destroyed, either accidentally or deliberately.

Over recent years a number of valuable sources of information have become available online. These include the General Register Office Northern Ireland (GRO) which holds a record of all births and deaths registered in the six counties of Northern Ireland from 1 January 1864. It also holds a record of non-Catholic marriages from 1

April 1845 and all marriages from 1 January 1864. An index of these records can now be searched online at <https://geni.nidirect.gov.uk>. In addition the General Register Office in Dublin has released a full index to these records free online together with images of births from 1864, marriages from 1870 and deaths from 1878 <https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie>.

We began by searching <https://civilrecords.irishgenealogy.ie> for the marriage of Henry Hamilton Wood and Isabella Monteith. They were married in Newtownstewart Presbyterian Church, Parish of Ardstraw, Co Tyrone on 24 March 1874 – **see copy in Appendix 1**. Henry H Wood was full age and a bachelor. He was a merchant living in Castlederg and his father was Henry Wood, a farmer. Isabella was also full age and a spinster. She was living in Newtownstewart and her father was Andrew Monteith, a merchant.

We then searched for children of Henry and Isabella and found the following births (**copies in Appendix 1**):

- i. **William John Watson Woods** born 22 June 1875 in Castlederg. His father Henry Hamilton Woods was shown as a draper.
- ✓ii. **Henry Irvine Wood** born 12 July 1877 in Castlederg. His father was Henry Hamilton Wood and this time he was shown as a merchant.
- ✓iii. **Sarah Elizabeth Wood** born 21 May 1879 in Castlederg. Her father was recorded as Henry Hamilton Wood a draper.

Isabella Margaret Wood née Monteith died on 23 October 1881 in Castlederg - **copy in Appendix 1**. She was 25 years old and a merchant's wife. Her cause of death was congestion of brain which she had for 10 hours. Her husband Henry H Wood was present at her death.

Henry Hamilton Wood remarried two years later on 22 November 1883 – **copy of marriage record in Appendix 1**. Henry was shown as a widower and a merchant living in Castlederg. His father was Henry Wood a farmer. Sarah Hunter was a spinster of full age living in Castlederg. Her occupation was left blank. Her father was William Hunter a farmer. They were married in the Church of Ireland Parish of Termonamongan, Co Tyrone.

We then searched for the birth of children of Henry Hamilton Wood and Sarah Hunter. We found the following (**see copies in Appendix 1**):

- i. **William John Wood** born in Castlederg on 18 September 1884. His father was Henry Hamilton Wood, a merchant in Castlederg.
- ✓ii. **Ernest Hamilton Wood** born in Castlederg on 4 May 1886. His father was Henry Hamilton Wood, a merchant in Castlederg.
- ✓iii. **Francis Balfour Wood** born on 8 December 1887 in Castlederg. His father was Henry H Wood, a merchant in Castlederg.
- ✓iv. **Beatrice Maud Wood** born 8 January 1891 in Castlesessagh. (Castlesessagh is a townland in the civil parish of Ulmey, Co Tyrone) Her father Henry H Wood

iv ✓ **Albert Edward Wood** born 22 February 1892 in Castlesessagh. His father ^{20 lea castlederg} Henry H Wood was a merchant. ^{1912 Had ch}

Henry Hamilton Wood died on 29 January 1909 in Castlesessagh, Co Tyrone – **copy in Appendix 1**. He was married, aged 65 and his occupation was an auctioneer. His cause of death was 'disease of bladder & prostate, chronic'. His son William J Wood was present at his death.

We then looked at each of the children of Henry Hamilton Wood taking account of the information you already have from the will of Henry and the index to birth, deaths and marriages.

William John Watson Woods born 1875. From the gravestone inscription he died in 1876 aged 16 months. In the GRO index William Woods died on 29 October 1876 aged 1 year. The death was registered in Castlederg.

Henry Irvine Wood born 1877. When his father made his will in 1907 Henry Irvine was living in San Francisco. Henry Irvine Wood died in the US on 24 September 1958 and is buried in the Soldiers Home National Cemetery, Washington DC. – **See Report of Interment in Appendix 2.**

Sarah Elizabeth Wood born 1879. In her father's will in 1907 she was referred to as Sarah Elizabeth Cooper. Sarah Elizabeth married James Cooper on 7 February 1905 –

James Cooper was 32, a bachelor, living in Castlederg. His father was John Cooper, farmer. They were married in Derg Church of Ireland. The witnesses were James Mitchell and Eliza Mary Wood.

James Cooper and Sarah Elizabeth Wood had at least the following children:

- i. Henry Ernest Cooper born in Castlederg on 24 March 1906
- ii. Isabella Jane Cooper born in Castlederg on 23 February 1908

We did not find the Cooper family in the 1911 Census of Ireland. However, we note that Harry Cooper, nephew in New York was the next of kin when Henry Irvine Wood died in 1958. This could indicate that the Cooper family also emigrated to the US. We then found the family in the 1925 New York State Census living in Rochester Ward 19. They had two further children ^{5/3/11} John and ^{1915 New York} Ethel born in the US. James Cooper was now working as a grocer.

1920 census they were living in New York. Co. Monm then in

William John Wood born 1884. In the 1911 Census William John Wood and his wife Florence Clare Wood are living at Main Street Castlederg. They had been married for a year and had no children. We found the birth of a child Ivy Wood born just after the census was completed on 24 April 1911 – **copy in Appendix 2**. This confirms that Florence Clare's maiden name was McHugh. We searched for the marriage of William John Wood and Florence Clare McHugh but did not find any record. It is possible

that they did not get married because of the conditions in the father's will but we cannot confirm this.

Florence 'Clara' Wood died on 9 August 1912 at Castlederg. She was shown as married, aged 26 and her husband W J Wood was present when she died – **copy in Appendix 2.**

Four years later William John Wood married Sadie Alexander ^{born 1898 Omagh} on 21 Feb 1916. Sadie was 18 years old and William John was shown as a widower – **copy in Appendix 2.** We found the birth of two children of William John and Sadie (Image of one is attached in Appendix 2 and information on the other from RootsIreland as image is not yet available):

- i. Gladys Wood born 19 November 1916, daughter of William J Wood and Sadie Alexander
- ii. Margaret May Wood born 9 May 1918, daughter of William J Wood and Sarah Alexander.

In the GRO Index we found the following births which appear to be further children William John Wood and Sadie Alexander.

- iii. Joan Wood born 14 January 1920, mother's maiden name Alexander, Registered Omagh

- iv. Hazle Wood born 13 October 1922, mother's maiden name Alexander, Registered Castlederg
- v. William Wood born 24 July 1926, mother's maiden name Alexander, Registered Castlederg

The Gladys Wood (above) born in 1916 appears to be the Miss Gladys G Wood referred to in the newspaper cutting that was attached to the letter from the Minister of Cappagh Church of Ireland in 1982. From the press cutting it appears that Miss Gladys Wood died relatively young, i.e. sometime after her father's death on 24 September 1928 and while her mother was still alive. She was buried in Cappagh. The Miss Wood who was the subject of the correspondence in 1982 appears to be a later generation and she was using the press cutting to confirm the existence of a family burying plot in Cappagh. A search of the GRO Index found the death of Gladys Wood on 4 September 1939 aged 21. The death was registered in Dungannon.

He was 35 in 1921 According to the census he arrived in Canada 1908
Ernest Hamilton Wood born 1886. Ernest Hamilton Wood emigrated and arrived in Quebec, Canada on 15 July 1911. He married Lilybel Darling on 7 October 1914 and had at least one child Henry Hamilton Wood. Henry Hamilton Wood was born in Vancouver on 4 September 1915 and died on 16 February 1996 aged 81. *6th Census Can*
They lived in a 9 room house (R) with a servant. 1921
of bank 37.50 canadian dollars a month

3000-
Francis Balfour Wood born 1887. From the information in his father's will it appears that Francis Balfour Wood may have been in an institution. In the 1901 Census we found a Woods W F (Woods Francis?) in a school in Ranelagh, Athlone, Co Westmeath. However he was shown as 24 years old and Roman Catholic. This may be

Francis Balfour Wood but we cannot be certain. We did not find a record of Francis Balfour Wood in the 1911 Census.

Beatrice Maud Wood born 1891. Beatrice Maud died on 13 August 1900 in Castlesessagh aged 9 years – see **copy in Appendix 2**. She was described as an auctioneer's daughter. Her cause of death was abdominal inflammation and suppurative peritonitis. Her brother William Wood was present when she died.

Albert Edward Wood born 1892. Albert Edward married Mary Angeline McHugh in St Peter's Church of Ireland in Dublin on 26 November 1913 – see **copy in Appendix 2**. He was a medical student living at 46 Synge Street, Dublin. Mary Angeline McHugh was a spinster living at Main Street Castlederg. Her father was William McHugh, a merchant.

Albert and Mary had a son Albert Edward Wood born on 16 May 1914 in Castlesessagh, Castlederg – see **copy in Appendix 2**. Edward Albert senior was still a student in 1914. We do not know if they had any other children.

We then looked at the Griffith's Valuation books for the townland of Castlesessagh. This was a valuation of all properties in Ireland was started in Co. Dublin in 1847 and completed in all counties by 1864. A summary version of this valuation, known as the Primary Valuation or more popularly as Griffith's Valuation after Sir Richard Griffith, the man appointed Commissioner of Valuation, was published in some 200 volumes arranged by poor law union. In addition to the names of householders and

landholders the valuation also provides the name of the person from whom the property was leased – the 'immediate lessor', a description of the property, its acreage and the valuation of both the land and the buildings. These records are available online at www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml

The valuation of the civil parish of Urney was completed in 1860 but there were no Wood householders in Castlesessagh at that date. As Wood children were born in this townland from 1891 onwards we examined the Valuation Revision Books.

The manuscript Griffith's valuation books were updated on a regular basis and these books up to c.1930 are available in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). They are also available on the PRONI website www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni.

The so-called 'cancelled books' consist of manuscript notebooks kept by the valuation office and updated to take account of changes in tenure. When a change of occupancy occurred, the name of the lessee or householder was crossed off and the new owner's name written above it, while the year was noted on the right-hand side of the page. Different-coloured ink was often used to differentiate between years with a key at the start of each book to indicate which colour went with each year. The years in which changes in occupancy took place help to establish significant dates in family history, such as dates of death, sale or emigration.

In the Valuation Revision Book **VAL/12/B/35/6D 1882-1890** we found that Henry H Wood took over the tenancy of a farm of nearly 26 acres including house, offices and land in 1890 from the previous tenant Robt Hemphill. The landlord was the Earl

of Castle Stewart. In the following Valuation Revision Book **VAL/12/B/35/6E 1890-1914** the property had been purchased and was now in the joint names of Henry H Wood and Wm John Wood.

We know from both marriage records for Henry Hamilton Wood that his father was called Henry Wood, a farmer. We also know from Henry Hamilton's will that he had a brother Francis and that Francis had a daughter Margaret. We searched the 1901 census and found a Francis Purcell Woods aged 52 living with his wife and two children in Main Street Castlederg. He was a Branch Bank Manager but he was shown as born in the US. We did not find this family in the 1911 census. This does not appear to be the brother of Henry Hamilton Wood.

In a further search of the 1901 census we found Francis Woods aged 60 in the townland of 'Meenmossague' Glebe, Clunahill, Co Tyrone. He was born in Co Tyrone. His wife was Jane also aged 60 and born in Co Fermanagh. Francis and Jane had three children the youngest being a daughter Margaret aged 22.

In the 1911 census Francis and Jane and their son and two daughters were still living in Meenmossogue Glebe. They had been married for 52 years. They had 8 children born alive but only three were still alive. Hugh Marshall, a brother-in-law of Francis Woods, also lived with them. A search of the GRO index found that Francis Woods and Jane Marshall were married in Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh on 10 May 1859.

We then searched and found the will of Francis Woods of Meenmossogue Lack, Co Tyrone – **copy in Appendix 3**. He died on 10 January 1917. In his will he mentioned a brother Thomas, a sister Mary Jane Noble and a nephew Thomas Woods. There was no mention of a brother Henry and at this stage we could not be certain that this was the brother of Henry Hamilton Wood. We examined the death record of Francis – **copy in Appendix 2**. He was 82 years old and a widower. His place of death was shown as 'Meenmossagh'.

In a further search of the PRONI Will Calendar we found a will of Henry Woods of Meenmossogue who died on 19 October 1899 – **copy in Appendix 3**. We examined this will in PRONI and in the will he mentioned his sons Henry, Francis, Irvine, John James in New Zealand, and Thomas in Garrison. He also mentioned daughters Mary Jane Noble and Anne Eliza Crawford. It appeared this could be the father of Francis Woods of Meenmossogue and possibly the father of Henry Hamilton Wood.

We then examined the will of your ancestor Henry Hamilton Wood and related papers in PRONI. (We note that you already have a transcribed copy of this will) The will was not probated until 1926 and an affidavit by his son Ernest Hamilton Wood explains the reason for this – **copy in Appendix 3**. Although Ernest was an executor of the will he was living in Canada and he had authorised his mother Sarah Wood to 'extract a grant' on his behalf but Sarah Wood, wife of Henry Hamilton Wood, had died on or about 1 January 1921 before probate was completed. (In the GRO Index Sarah Wood aged 70 died on 14 August 1920) The documents also included a typed copy of Henry Hamilton's will – **copy in Appendix 3**. Section 6 of the will was the bequest 'to my

niece Margaret Wood younger daughter of my brother Francis of Meenmossagh'. This was important as the copy of the will which you have spelled the townland name as 'Meenaseragh'. This shows that the townland of Meenmossogue is sometimes spelled Meenmossagh. We believe this confirms that Francis Woods of Meenmossogue/Meenmossagh is the brother of your ancestor Henry Hamilton Wood. Meenmossogue/Meenmossagh is a townland in the civil parish of Longfield West, Co Tyrone.

Finally, we examined the death record of Henry Woods – **copy in Appendix 2**. This shows that he was a widower aged 95 years and that he died in the townland of Meenmossogue on 19 October 1899. His occupation was a farmer. We believe this confirms beyond doubt that this Henry Woods was the father of your ancestor Henry Hamilton Wood.

Conclusion

We are pleased to report that we have found a considerable amount of information on your ancestor Henry Hamilton Wood and his family. In particular we have found that he had four brothers, Francis, Irvine, John James in New Zealand, and Thomas in Garrison. He also had two sisters Mary Jane Noble and Anne Eliza Crawford.